



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: June 28, 2011

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Transportation Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Consideration Of The California Department Of Transportation
Request For Guidance On A Re-Striping Plan For Cliff Drive

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council support the request by California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to consider a re-striping plan as part of a pavement maintenance project, which would reduce the number of through traffic lanes on Cliff Drive between Loma Alta Drive and Meigs Road, and create a center turn lane and bike lanes.

DISCUSSION:

A group known as the Mesa Architects has been exploring various options for improving pedestrian and traffic safety on Cliff Drive. After gathering community input, they have requested that Caltrans adjust the number of lanes on Cliff Drive from four to two travel lanes and add a center turn lane and two bike lanes, while retaining the on-street parking. Reasons for the proposal expressed by the Mesa Architects include collision reduction, improved sight distance, traffic speed reduction, addition of a bicycle facility, and improved residential/commercial driveway and side street access (see Attachment). Caltrans is willing to restripe the roadway if there is support from the Santa Barbara City Council for the proposed change. Caltrans would bear the expense for the striping because the street is currently scheduled for pavement maintenance in late June/early July and will need to be re-striped following the surface improvements to the roadway.

The proposed striping change meets the Caltrans standard road design. Cliff Drive currently has approximately 15,000 average daily trips in the subject sections. After the change, the roadway will perform much like Meigs Road north of Cliff Drive which currently carries the same number of cars and has the two-lane roadway configuration. The proposed roadway striping would widen out again to four lanes at the intersections at Loma Alta Drive, and Meigs Road. Therefore, the level of service at these intersections will not change. Staff supports this request as it will improve the safety for left turning vehicles. The Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC) will hear a report on this item at a special meeting on June 23, 2011, and staff will report the TCC recommendation at the Council Meeting.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

There is no cost to the City other than the staff resources required to coordinate with Caltrans.

ATTACHMENT(S): 1. Letter from Caltrans
2. Letter from Mesa Architects
3. Addendum to Letter from Caltrans

PREPARED BY: Browning Allen, Transportation Manager/kts

SUBMITTED BY: Christine F. Andersen, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

June 22, 2011

Helene Schneider
Mayor
City of Santa Barbara
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

Dear Mayor Schneider:

ROUTE 225 PROPOSAL

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) agrees that State Route 225 should eventually be a City facility and looks forward to working with your staff on the details of relinquishment.

In the meantime, Caltrans is committed to working with the City of Santa Barbara to implement a City proposal to re-stripe a segment of the highway to reduce the number of lanes. Once consensus has been established and the City provides a striping plan along with a traffic analysis to Caltrans, we can then consider how best to implement the changes.

Please direct future correspondence to Steve Price, Deputy District Director of Maintenance and Operations, at the above address. Should you have any questions, Mr. Price can be reached by calling (805) 549-3281.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Krumholz".

RICHARD KRUMHOLZ
District Director

c: Honorable Das Williams, California State Assembly
Jim Kemp, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

THOMPSON



NAYLOR architects

Date: June 17, 2011
 To: Mayor and City Council members
 From: Dennis Thompson
 Re: Re-striping of Cliff Drive

Mayor and Council Members:

At the request of numerous Mesa residents, our volunteer group, the Mesa Architects, is requesting an item be added to the City Council agenda at the earliest possible date to discuss Cliff Drive re-striping. We propose to present the results of an online survey, a petition drive, and portions of the testimony given by over 30 Mesa residents during a recent Mesa neighborhood meeting regarding Cliff Drive safety. The meeting was attended by over 100 citizens, and by representatives from Assembly Member Williams, Caltrans, City Transportation, and City Planning.

We were recently informed that Caltrans has let a contract for resurfacing and re-striping Cliff Drive. This means that we have a very unique opportunity to redesign the striping to provide more safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, at no cost to the City. Since this work is scheduled in July, City Council endorsement of this project is urgent.

The striping change would occur from the City Fire station east to Loma Alta, changing the road from 4 travel lanes without turn lanes or bike lanes into 2 travel lanes, a turn lane, and 2 bike lanes. The reasons to endorse these important safety improvements include:

1. It will reduce excess vehicle speed.
2. It will reduce collisions.
3. It will improve sight distance.
4. It will improve driveway access for residents.
5. It will shorten pedestrian crossings.
6. It will add bike lanes.

We strongly urge the City Council to endorse this project as soon as possible in the support of community interest and road safety. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dennis Thompson
 For the Mesa Architects, a neighborhood volunteer group

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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June 23, 2011

Helene Schneider
Mayor
City of Santa Barbara
P.O. Box 1990
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

Dear Mayor Schneider:

CLARIFICATION ON ROUTE 225 PROPOSAL

This letter seeks to clarify our correspondence dated June 22, 2011.

We understand that the origin of the restriping proposal is from Cliff Drive area residents as represented by the Mesa Architects group. The proposal to address the community's interests involves reducing the number of through lanes, providing for left turns and bike lanes on a segment of Route 225.

The Department is committed to working with the City of Santa Barbara, as the sponsor of the proposal, to implement the proposed changes consistent with our responsibilities for the route. With local support to be confirmed by the City Council, we anticipate the city will submit a traffic analysis along with a set of striping plans for our consideration. With that, we will work with the city to determine the best way to implement the proposal.

I hope this clarifies our understanding of the proposal and our commitment to cooperating with the city to address community interests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Krumholz".

 RICHARD KRUMHOLZ
District Director

- c. Honorable Das Williams, California State Assembly
Jim Kemp, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments

CORRESPONDENCE

Mesa Village Town Hall Meeting

Topic: Restriping Cliff Drive

June 14th, 2011

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stuart Magee

"Terrifying" to ride bikes on Cliff Drive turn lanes. Should be able to take a direct route using CLIFF DRIVE to get to shops. There would be more bike traffic... letting children walk or bike across Cliff Drive or ...?

Natalie Ochsner

Witnessed accidents on the Mesa. Kids driving bikes on their side of Cliff but can't cross safely. Restriping Cliff is a great opportunity for bike lanes, cross walks,...

Ellen Kelley

An issue of fairness. Primary use is now "vehicular." We need people-time. Street trees, driveways...worried about child being hit by cars backing out of driveways.-

Derrik Eichelberger

Can't believe that we're making speed on this issue. Cliff Drive is the "elephant" in the room. Road diet should get done.

Angela Bell

Living at SHIFCO for 16 years. Had meetings with the State 16 years ago to get a crosswalk and light on Cliff Drive. Didn't have police on Cliff Drive before that. The State put handicapped ramps on the street corners – there've been some improvements.

Delighted with the group of professionals who are looking at the "flow" on Cliff Drive. What a creative approach! Watch seniors on walkers trying to get a bus. Hear the concerns of people who live ON Cliff Drive who are working to get SAFETY. I know of one elder woman killed on Cliff Drive. Life and safety is more important than money.

Tom Ochsner

We have raised our kids with Cliff Drive as an obstacle. It's a "thoroughfare." Driveways that back onto Cliff Drive including schools, church, etc with driveways that back onto Cliff Drive. It was designed as a State Highway; you can't help but go 45 or 50 miles an hour. What is 29 seconds...?

(letter) witnessed or observed at least 10 accidents, car totaled by an intoxicated driver, cars flying into the front drive. Cars destroyed landscaping; pick up truck totaled in front of a neighbor's house. Speeding vehicle crashed through front yard. Intoxicated driver lost control, became air born, and landed Death of a woman who was backing out ...on Mother's Day.

Sean Hastings (Homeowner)

Doesn't allow kids on Cliff Drive. Urges support of the "road diet." Seems a prudent move. Move into the longer version of planning but good short-term move. Mixed modal transportation, safety. It beautifies the city. There may be Push Back on traffic circulation patterns. The traffic patterns aren't going to be a problem...

Laurel Perez (resident)

We'll drive to a party rather than try to scramble to cross the CD. Taking the bus to be able to get to the ride side of the street. We have the power to make a difference. Road Diet is a tremendous opportunity.

(letter) Cliff Drive – change 4 lanes to 2 lanes so residents can make turns into driveways or side streets; lower speed limits; add vegetation to make walking more pleasant; traffic calming. Safe streets- what our neighborhoods deserve.

Chris Cottrell

We use Shoreline every day. Cliff Drive could be as beautiful.

(letter) high payoff, but inexpensive. Safe left turn lanes. Have seen dozens of rear-end accidents. Leftward jog restricts visibility. Restriping would avoid placing two vehicles in the same lane. Street is dangerous because it's too fast. One cross at Monroe, one at Meigs. Schools, churches, ... we need to cross but people take their lives in their hands to cross.

John Kelley

Use Cliff Drive daily. Designed as a high-speed highway, resulting in accidents and fatalities. Critics of changing Cliff Drive have said: it's an evacuation route.

Not true. Route is above Foothill.

They've also said 2 traffic lanes will cause major congestion. But many 2 lane streets are functioning

smoothly...; longer travel time will be a problem; huge exaggeration. Everyone will benefit from safety, including the motorists.

Mike Coyle (Letter carrier)

Lived here 30 years. It's always a guessing game to see how fast cars will accelerate (from 20 to 45 miles/ hour). People are at risk of being rear-ended. SBCC students or other motorists getting to 101. Lowering the speed limit would go a long way to ensuring vehicle safety.

Gayle Waite

Raised 2 daughters since 1982. Students crossing from apt buildings. People making left hand turns from Campus. Busses stop there, where right hand lane ends. Left hand turn lanes. Traffic lights needed.

Inger Budke

Coordinator of SHIFCO, as advocate for residents. Mostly single residents. 130 residents. 20% of residents involved in accidents. Cal Trans meeting (years ago); nobody ever talks about 'near misses.' Others who stop risk being in an accident themselves (rear ended).

Speaking as an advocate for the residents. Their voice is important. SHIFCO is their home. They want to participate...

As parent of child at Washington, have to figure out how to cross Cliff Drive if they walk their children to school.

Center Turn Lane; would it slow down traffic? At risk of being rear-ended by cars coming up behind you. We could rest at the turn lane (without concern.)

Krista King

SHIFCO area referred to as "the death trap." Was a victim of an accident last year. Perfect visibility. Stopped for a left hand turn. BLAZER driving 50 miles/hour when hit; shoved me 100 feet ahead; went on the curve, hit a pole, with pedestrians. "I was lucky!" Support the striping for the safety. As mother, my daughter did the "matador dance" crossing Cliff to get to SBCC. Carpinteria has crosswalks for pedestrians walking.

Daniel McCarter (retired Fire Chief)

154 is safer...! The "Road Diet" would be a great safety improvement over current situation. "If it is predictable, it is preventable". We'll continue to experience vehicular incidents. Fewer responses from emergency personnel is better for everyone. No problem maneuvering a fire apparatus on the roads with center lanes or roads with left turn lanes. Evacuation is most efficient when single file lane is moving at a regular rate. "Thanks to Cal Trans for repaving road..." Safely connect Douglas Preserve and Elings park.

Wayne Tustin

Resident at 1520 Santa Rosa Avenue. Recently repaved our street and there are already holes in the street. "Is that a sample of what they'll do to CD?"

Pat Edick

gas station

Sally Witnov

Lived here for over 30 years. Thanks to Mesa Architects for their work. Supports proposal. Dangerous intersection: "Cliff Drive and Flora Vista signals don't synch up." I walk across the highway to get to Elings because we lack a sidewalk on one side of the street.

Owen Dell

Ditto to everything everyone's said. Longer term idea of "greening Cliff Drive." Idea: lighted crosswalks...ineffective, can't see them in the light. Japan's idea of walking with the flag as you cross the street! Low tech, organic way to cross the street.

Lesley Wiscomb

No matter which hat I wear, it's about safety. Few opportunities for residents to use other means of transportation other than the automobile. SBCC, parks, etc. but few opportunities to walk from schools to parks. When bike lane abruptly ends, you're thrown into traffic. As a runner, crossing many sidestreets, it isn't safe without a

crosswalk. We'd prefer to go to local restaurants if we could walk there and access them and our local businesses. Mesa Architects provide balanced ideas to consider which would greatly improve safety and create a unified Mesa neighborhood.

Adam Green (SBCC Faculty)

SBCC faculty/administrators are here for a longer time than students. Trying to make a LEFT hand turn out of campus during the winter, when the sun is coming over the rise, and you're looking into it. It's like an old film. Makes a RIGHT TURN instead because it's not safe to make a left. Hard to convince students to ride bikes because of the safety issues. It's not getting easier for vehicles. Designing around pedestrians and cyclists makes sense. Take an unsafe street and create a community around it. This is a "soft-ball" decision; let's do it.

Cricket Wood

Rides bikes daily to get to Monroe. We have to cross 3 streets. My sons have been nearly hit riding with us. People are zooming up the hill riding up Cliff Drive and they aren't looking—even with parent, crossing guard, light. Mother and daughter were hit in a crosswalk 2 years ago. Student was hit. Slow people down on Cliff Drive. Do the Road Diet to slow down people ... Walking along the sidewalk with twins in a stroller and with limited crosswalks, it made it crazy. I hope the plans are considered (by panel). Consider the landscaping between the cars and the bikes.

Eva Inbar

2 Mesa Schools have the worst situation, in comparison to other schools. Washington kids have worst situation. They DO want to walk and bike. Time to do something about it. Mesa children deserve better.

Gil Berry

Propose slightly alternative design: keep 4 lanes, add stoplights, crosswalks. Braemar Association is NOT in favor of 2 lanes. Everyone wants beautification and safety. Doubles traffic in the one lane. SBCAG model for traffic projection: they found that the 101 is at capacity now. More traffic is predicted. Consider nuclear power plant if there is an accident in terms of evacuation.

Susan Horne

2 years ago involved in her own crash. My one block street had a similar rear-end accident one month earlier. Backing out of driveway, a woman was hit by truck. Fatalities. "Safe Routes to School" project. Health impacts of transportation. Urged panel to continue route of improvements. Cliff Drive splits our community. Create one community by allowing access. Let's not forget beautification. When people feel safe to walk to schools and business, good for our economy and larger community.

Peggy Cooley

Moved here in '70's. Neighbor hurt by accident shortly after moving in (she was maimed, her son was killed). A bit of history – there have been 3 or 4 major accidents in our half-

block area. Happy to see this much accomplished. This idea of the "road diet..." I'd be delighted to have it happen soon.

June Pujo

Upper Chapala used to be 4 lanes; then replaced with a bike lane. A positive change in our life. We are a true neighborhood. Safer and quieter. Flow of traffic works fine. Skeptics warned of double the cars, problem of flow. "quote"—directive 64 "directs improvement of streets to make it accessible to ALL USERS, not just cars. See "paving plans and restriping plans."

Christine Bourgeois

Everyday we take a chance when we ride our bikes. Counting bikes from 4-6 pm; 67 bikes today. 25 were on the sidewalk. SBCC Bike racks are empty. Support the Road Diet and more bike lanes on Cliff Drive.

JE Goolsby

"The Mesa is a consequence, not a plan. "Have been run of the road on Cliff Drive. SHIFCO is an acute area for the problem. Don't like the idea of a bike being caught between parked cars and traffic. (Why not) bridges? Painting lines is more of a band-aid. Superficial fix. "Second thoroughfare on the Mesa, besides Cliff Drive?"

Mike Zapata

Scared to walk or ride bike on Cliff Drive. Here for the safety of myself, my 2 young kids, my neighbors. Take back our community message (to Cal Trans). The Mesa is where I am when I walk out the front door. Kids are 4, 2. Appeal to you to make these changes when we have this opportunity so kids can walk up to get pizza and ice cream at village center.

Sylvia Edney

I am not in agreement. Against having 2 lanes vs. 4 lanes. I think traffic will be the same. Sidewalks at SHIFCO, walk the dog to ELINGS—agree with that. Bulbouts re bicycling? How is that safer than adding a bike lane? Having trees in the middle of the road impedes visibility. Many different solutions. Love the idea of a "pedestrian zone" near Dominos, etc. Scrambled sidewalks would be great for our community. Good to have community input to make the streets safer. More discussion and studying these things...good idea.

Christian Marx

To get here safely I had to zig-zag through the neighborhood. Crossing CD is incredibly uncomfortable. Restriping idea is 90% of the benefit with 10% of the effort. Las Positas and Meigs Road are 2 lane roads and they work well. Stopping restriping is decreasing the benefits by half. Congestion is caused when lanes merge. Keep it all 2 lanes.

Dale Kearin

As a new father, my priorities have shifted. I don't want to talk about this in 15 years. Make CD a neighborhood. Car has run into my neighbor's master bedroom. Pulled 2 people out of the cars; one died. We've had many near misses with dog running into CD.

I've almost hit people, even when driving slowly; sun coming in, people straggling...a dangerous situation. People will move out of the neighborhood to have a safer community. Support the Cliff Drive Diet. "Let's do everything we can to make this happen."